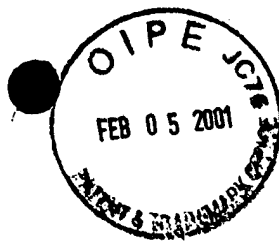


Group Art Unit: 3627



Atty. Ref.: USUI-12N

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Applicant : Shoichiro Usui

RECEIVED

Serial No. : 09/731,170

AUG 28 2001

Filed : December 6, 2000

OFFICE OF PETITIONS

For : HIGH-PRESSURE METAL PIPE HAVING CONNECTING HEAD
AND METHOD OF FORMING THE CONNECTING HEAD
AS WELL AS SLEEVE WASHER FOR THE CONNECTING HEAD

Assistant Commissioner for Patents
Washington, DC 20231

DECLARATION OF JANIS VAN AKELIJEN

I, Janis van Akelijen, submit this Declaration in support of the Petition of Gerald E. Hespos. I have carefully reviewed the entire Petition of Gerald E. Hespos, and I concur with all the assertions made therein. I have worked with Gerald E. Hespos for seven (7) years as a legal secretary in connection with the preparation, filing and prosecution of patent applications. Our office policy is to closely check all newly filed applications for completeness and to identify all parts of an application on the return postcard that we file with the application. I am aware that an incomplete application could affect the filing date of an application and that the filing date is extremely important for applications that claim priority on a foreign application. As a result, I carefully check to ensure that each page of an application is present and readable and that each Figure referred to in the specification is present and readable. I then prepare a postcard that identifies the components of the application and I present the complete application package to Mr. Hespos or his partner for final review and execution of the transmittal documents. Normally, I would have no recollection about details relating to a

specific application that I filed eight weeks ago. In this instance, this was the first application for which I prepared an Information Data Sheet. I specifically remember taking considerable care and checking each part of the application, and I am certain that the application was filed with five (5) sheets of drawings as reflected on both the postcard and on the Information Data Sheet.

The undersigned hereby declares that all statements made herein of my own knowledge are true and that all statements made on information and belief are believed to be true, and further that these statements were made with the knowledge that willful false statements and the like so made are punishable by fine or imprisonment, or both, under Section 1001 of Title 18 of the United States Code and that such willful false statements may jeopardize the validity of the application or any patent issued thereon.

J. VAN AKELIJEN

Janis van Akelijen

Date: FEBRUARY 1, 2001

RECEIVED

AUG 28 2001

OFFICE OF PETITIONS